

NOTES ON SOME BUPRESTIDÆ OF SOUTHWESTERN
OREGON
(Coleoptera)

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During the winter of 1938-39 and the following spring and summer, a number of unusual Buprestidæ were taken in southwestern Oregon which may be of interest to collectors. Along with this, some observations were made on the habits of others, which, I believe, are worthy of mention.

The flora of the Rogue River Valley¹ is generally considered to be predominantly Californian. The mountainous country on the southern border of the valley is, topographically, a westward extension of the Sierra Nevada and Cascade ranges and their connection with the Coastal range. It is here that many of the semi-desert plants of the Sierra and Great Plain region gain entrance and extend into this area. Thus, with their host plants present, it is not surprising that a number of typical Californian Buprestids should be found here.

POLYCESTA CALIFORNICA LeC.

Though this species has been reported as common from southern Oregon and from a number of hosts, it is interesting to note that willow (*Salix sp.*), hitherto unlisted, is also one of its host plants.

ACMÆODERA PLAGIATICAUDA Horn

Although this species has not been reported from southern Oregon, it is not surprising to find that it occurs here. Two specimens were dug from manzanita (*Arctostaphylos viscida*) about two miles east of Murphy, Josephine County, Oregon. Later, two specimens were collected from the same host near Trail, Jackson County, Oregon. One was dug from a wood scar, the other was taken while feeding on a cluster of young leaves. The larvæ stay near dead wood and are generally found very close to the ground.

¹ Piper and Beattie, *The Flora of the northwest Coast*, p. iii.

ACMÆODERA CONNEXA LeC.

During the middle of February while collecting in a burn that had occurred in the fall of 1931, seven adult specimens and a number of larvæ of this species were dug from the heart-wood of oak (*Quercus garryana*). The trees varied in size from about three to six inches in diameter and still had solid wood. The collection was made on Humbug Creek, two and one-half miles from Applegate, Jackson County, Oregon. Very little variation in markings was noted. At various times during the spring, specimens almost identical were collected near Grants Pass from one of our fire weeds (*Epilobium* sp.) and from a composite (*Monolopia major*) from Copper, on the upper Applegate River.

ACMÆODERA SINUATA var. SEXNOTATA Van Dyke

Five specimens of this unusual variety were taken in the valley; all were typical and showed little or no variation in markings. Two specimens were dug from chaparral (*Ceanothus cuneatus*), one being collected about two miles east of Murphy, Josephine County, Oregon, on an exposed hillside of the Applegate Valley, the other under identical conditions about one mile west of the city of Rogue River, Jackson County, Oregon. Later, three specimens were swept from the above reported host growing near Grants Pass.

ACMÆODERA ANGELICA Fall

Fourteen specimens of this little Buprestid were collected at various places throughout the valley. Five were dug from the heart wood of chaparral (*Ceanothus cuneatus*), and others were collected in flight near, or swept from, the dead branches of the host plant.

MELANOPHILA INTRUSA Horn

This is by no means a common species in our locality. It is found on pines which are dying, and usually only on trees that yet have a little life as shown by the fact that spring buds had developed a short distance. A number of specimens were observed on young fire-scorched pines, but none was seen on nearby trees which had been completely killed.

MELANOPHILA OCCIDENTALIS Obenberger

It seems surprising to find this species so far north, as Sloop² reports it only from California, recording specimens taken from Orange County. However, as reported by Van Dyke³ and Linsley⁴ and as shown by Sloop⁵, these forms have a special sensory pit which makes them sensitive to acrid odors and fumes, and since they have been known to travel long distances to fires, etc., it is not really surprising that we should find the species here. As Sloop stated, the adults and larvæ were collected from oak. Both Oregon white oak (*Quercus garryana*) and California black oak (*Q. californica*) are hosts, as is also Madroña (*Arbutus menziesii*). I suspect that careful examination of our boxes of *Melanophila* would prove this species to be confused with *acuminata*, and that they may be rather widely distributed in our western region. The species can readily be determined by dissection of the genitalia.

MELANOPHILA CONSPUTA LeC.

The larvæ of this species are very common in the charred, fire-killed limbs of second-growth yellow pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) and lodgepole pine (*P. contorta*). They are very common where the trees are scattering, as in the fringe type stand. Pupating insects have been found near the heart-wood of limbs in all cases. More recent observations have shown this species to be very common just after a fire, and they were observed to oviposit on both the trunk and limbs. However, no larvæ or pupating specimens have been found other than in the limbs.

CHRYSOBOTHRIS CYANELLA Horn

This is another little insect that is very common in our region, extending its range from the valleys to the summits of the Cascades and Siskiyou. Chamberlin⁶ reports yellow pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) as the probable host, but the larvæ are found to inhabit the woody roots of the wild buckwheat (*Eriogonum nudum*) on which they are so often collected. There are numer-

² Sloop, K. D., Univ. of Calif. Publ. Ent., Vol. VII, p. 10, 1937.

³ Van Dyke, E. C., Pan-Pacific Ent., Vol. III, p. 41, 1926.

⁴ Linsley, E. G., Pan-Pacific Ent., Vol. IV, p. 138, 1933.

⁵ Sloop, K. D., Univ. of Calif. Publ. Ent., Vol. VII, p. 2, 1937.

⁶ Chamberlin, W. J., Catalogue of Buprestidæ of N. Amer., p. 145, 1926.

ous larvæ, but relatively few reach maturity because of a parasite which destroys over half the larvæ, or did so this past winter.

CHRYSOBOTHRIS DOLATA Horn

Two specimens, both males, were reared from a limb of Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga taxifolia*) which was picked up at Prospect, Jackson County, Oregon. This is a new host plant for this uncommon insect.

CHRYSOBOTHRIS CALCARATA Chamberlin

Three males and a single female were collected on chaparral (*Ceanothus cuneatus*) near Wilderville, on the banks of the Applegate River. No females were known to Chamberlin⁷ at the time he described the species. The female antennæ are coppery-bronze, serrate from the fourth segment and narrowing toward the tip; the first segment is as long as the next two combined as in the male. The upper surface is much less pubescent. The last ventral segment is rather completely rounded, similar to that of *C. harrisi* Hentz. The "wide smooth line running from the base to almost one-half way to the front" of the pronotum is not entirely constant in all cases, but with several specimens it can be determined. An odd act exhibited by this species is a unique way of flicking the abdomen as the insect crawls around on small twigs in the sun.

It is rather an unusual circumstance that this species should occur this far north since the type specimen was taken at Prescott, Arizona.

⁷ Chamberlin, W. J., Pan-Pacific Ent., Vol. XIV, p. 12, 1938.

A RECORD OF PHYSOCEPHALA AFFINIS WILLISTON AS A PARASITE OF ADULT BEMBIX COMATA PARKER

The sand wasp, *Bembix comata* Parker, which nests in the sand flats at Emeryville, California, is frequently parasitized by the conopid fly, *Physocephala affinis* Williston, which can be collected nearby on sweet clover blossoms. The habits of the fly at this locality are similar to those recorded in a recent paper¹ for the same species as a parasite of *Bembix occidentalis beutenmuelleri* Fox.—By G. E. Bohart and J. W. MacSwain.

¹Bohart, G. E., and J. W. MacSwain, 1939, Bull. South. Cal. Acad. Sci., 38:93-95.